

CRISIS NOTES

Deception

What makes deception, if any, easier or feasible, is that it is based on encouraging & exploiting self-deception, useful or otherwise, or preconception & expectation.

It aims to convince victim of something he already tends to believe; it leads him to deprecate, or better, to ignore, to pay no attention to, possibilities which he (Gives him basis for convincing others; already regarded as unlikely. for acting, or failing to intervene)

This, in retrospect, and to an empathetic observer (one unwilling to concede that the preconceptions were natural and reasonable in the circumstances), then may have seemed to be no deception at all; or, self-deception may seem paramount. (This accentuates political embarrassment).

This is especially true if : 1) opponent tries to minimize obvious deception, down to "necessary" amount, & relies on close feedback to check on what is necessary. 2) nature of deception is well-tailored to victim's prejudices, so that sleazy/discretion/vagueness/ambiguity and subtle misdirection are all that are "necessary" to ensure sufficient deception.

[Threats for any period in which military commands can plausibly claim a need to ready their contingency plans, etc. the demand will arise for extensive recon, including low-level.

If Admin is not prepared to say it will not implement plans, it will be hard to resist this pressure, despite inhibitions.]

[See: "Might-have-been" crisis of June 1962: 3) Massing of Chinese troops near Taiwan Straits; 4) possibility of Chinese action; 5) Chinese withdrawal from us (like Suez!)]



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Failures in intelligence

related to game experts. Failures to predict enemy actions ~~the~~ which were (or "should have been") sensitive to enemy predictions or understanding of our policies or responses.

One failure often rests on our wrong prediction (or, over-confidence in prediction) of enemy's prediction (i.e. our prediction of one component, premise, of enemy calculations & actions leading to his actions).

(Other possible failures: a) false estimate of other action premises: his goals, values, focus, relevant goals (perception of problem).

b) overemphasis on the role of coherent calculation in determining his policy; overlooking ^{a)} internal conflict, (of expectations, national goals, private goals), (b) inertia, rigidity, constraint, perceived constraint, lack of awareness; c) emotion).

(Distinguished: "failure to transmit - failure to receive, or notice" from "failure to convince, provide adequate evidence, be understood 'correctly', have desired effect")

We may attribute his failure of prediction as:

1) Failure to "communicate" (our likely response, policy).

But: a) Were we trying? Or were we deliberately ambiguous, misleading, silent?

b) If we had tried, would we have tried to communicate what we, in the event, actually did?

c) Would that have been "true," reliable? A good, safe prediction of what we were likely to do? Or, was our actual action more dependent than we realize now on "misleading," special, unusual, uncontrolled circumstances?

[The Pres speech, revelation (likely but not certain?!)
even blockade, appeal to OAS, NATO, UN, even deployment, letters to K, were all likely (though K may have hoped they would come later; and JFK's actions may have supported this) — but were they enough to deter? What edge was essential? Was that "inevitable" — to be regarded as near-certain by "any reasonable observer"? Did K over-rationalize US response?

(All mistakes that we might make are open to loss; do we allow for that?)

Robert Sorensen? In Aug, did Dulles reply to Eden — not to publish — that force was acceptable as "last resort."?

6) Flaws in ^{info} ~~analysis~~ info available to him, interpretation of evidence.

But: 2) Do we know all evidence available to him?

(esp., does the critic/analyst: the man trying to understand Sov behavior better, for future prediction?)

Was there "noise"?

Were we unambiguous?

Did we try to deceive, mislead?

(A danger of deception: it not only surprises, ad angers, but raises fears: Why did he do that? What must he be trying to achieve? How malevolent is he? The victim's self-esteem prevents him from imagining immediately that deception of him could have been casual, with limited purpose & hope of gain, and without fear of retaliation: it meant mean, major goals, acceptance of major risks (recklessness, major designs), deep hostility...

Korea, (Aug?), Cuba?

ONE IS RELUCTANT TO PERCEIVE CONTEMPT — AND WHEN ONE DOES! (Both phases are dangerous for aggression).

Aggressor's problem:

- 1) To maintain secrecy, but while
- 2) restraining fears of ultimate goals; making action appear limited; and

- 3) Not revealing contempt; yet

(A style revealing apprehension does not reveal contempt; ~~the~~ but may suggest extremely threatening goals. Did "openness" - to U-2 - appear noteworthy at the time, to intell. comm? To Excomm?)

- 4) Direct goal may be, attack on opponents (JFK's) prestige. (The Most Dangerous Game?)

c) How well do intell. analysts understand US actual policy, plans, probable responses?

(See Santorum on Ann Arbor speech; others!)

How explicitly can the analyzer in terms of possible changes in US policy, or differences between declared + "actual" policy? (which other intell. services are free to "speculate" about)?

Is the Intelligence Prod Team free — not only to see ^{out} like Russians — but to look at US policy + actions objectively, coldly? gather + analyze evidence on US policy, in addition to assertions, precepts, & patriotic assumptions? Are they free as an ally; or as a columnist; or as a party out of office?

Are they free to imagine or perceive what Our Best Friends Want Tell Us?

Do they examine systematically the messages we are sending? The communicative/revealing aspect of our actions? The probable output of foreign intelligence services?

In absence of evidence, intell. estimates revealed
preconceptions; and at least one of those preconceptions —
SC intell. estimates on US response — seems questionably
confident.